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Mrs Fiona Shields
Headteacher
Dove Bank Primary School
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Dear Mrs Shields

Short inspection of Dove Bank Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since your school was judged to be good in September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You are a highly committed and dynamic leader who has dealt with the school's priorities effectively. You work with a caring team and have harnessed their skills and expertise well to ensure that teaching and learning are effective throughout the school. You know the staff and pupils well. You have fostered warm and caring relationships and created a highly inclusive school. Parents speak highly of your leadership and the care shown by staff for their children.

Pupils are polite and enthusiastic learners. They are keen to do well and support each other during lessons. They are independent learners and know how to succeed in the tasks that they are given because teachers give clear explanations. Teachers regularly remind pupils about strategies they can use to help them learn. These include asking a classmate, using their word cards or using a dictionary.

Since the last inspection you have tackled the areas for improvement effectively. You have ensured that teachers plan work that matches pupils' needs well. You have introduced a programme of learning to help teachers to plan mathematics activities effectively. Teachers supplement this programme with other work to build on pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.

You have ensured that the calculation policy meets the needs of the school and the

new mathematics curriculum. Teachers provide interesting ways for pupils to learn and build upon their mental arithmetic skills. For example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 enjoyed practising their multiplication tables. The teacher expertly provided strategies throughout the lesson so that pupils could use their number facts to solve multiplication sums. Pupils were engaged throughout the lesson and enjoyed using and applying their mental calculation skills.

You have also worked with staff to develop pupils' independence skills successfully. You have introduced a programme that focuses on key skills such as perseverance and determination. It builds a 'have a go' mentality among pupils. These messages are promoted throughout the school and were noticeable in pupils' attitudes to learning in their classes. Pupils are effective learners and positive in their approaches when solving a range of problems.

You recognise that early years assessment information is not yet used incisively enough to provide deeply challenging activities. You have recently purchased new resources for both the inside and outside learning areas.

During a book scrutiny, I noted that some pupils, particularly the most able, were completing work that was too easy for them. This was slowing their progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff and governors know and understand their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. They are well trained and receive regular updates. Should staff have concerns, no matter how minor, they report their concerns to the headteacher. They know fully the procedures for reporting concerns.

The school's records of pupils who are a concern are detailed, well organised and kept securely. You are fastidious with your record-keeping, ensuring that every action is recorded in detail. You follow up concerns swiftly and keep a chronology of actions taken. The headteacher works closely with parents.

The school places a high priority on pupils' safety, and particularly on keeping safe online. Pupils know about the various ways the school keeps them safe. For example, pupils have had visits from the police, the fire service and the life boat service. Pupils receive regular reminders about online safety during school events.

Inspection findings

- The school is a vibrant and safe place to learn. Pupils are kind and considerate towards each other. They know about the importance of tolerance and respect for others. They confidently talk about their learning and listen to each other's views. The school's work in creating an ethos built on positivity, responsibility, independence, diversity and enthusiasm is evident throughout the school. For example, pupils in the early years and key stage 1 ably performed the dress rehearsal of a performance to the rest of the school. They all performed

confidently and were rightly proud of their achievement.

- The governing body is effective and determined to improve the school further. Governors know the duties and responsibilities of the governing body well. They work well as a team to ensure that they have a good oversight of the school's priorities. The governing body checks that senior leaders are improving the quality of teaching by overseeing the arrangements for performance management. Governors visit the school regularly to discuss pupils' attainment and progress, and the actions that leaders need to take next. Governors are knowledgeable about how the school spends its extra resources such as the pupil premium grant and the primary physical education and sport funding.
- Teachers plan an imaginative, rich and vibrant curriculum which includes a range of enrichment activities. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoyed a walk around the local village to find aspects of Victorian architecture. They linked these buildings to their topic about Victorian Britain. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed learning about the role of a police officer during a recent visit to the school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have had opportunities to use their knowledge of mathematics across the curriculum. For example, pupils made different body shapes during a physical education lesson. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning because the curriculum caters for their needs and interests and the activities are engaging and exciting. Pupils visit a range of museums and enjoy regular visits from a theatre group to further enrich their curriculum.
- Children in the early years have a range of opportunities to practise their reading, writing and mathematics skills. For example, a group of children enjoyed learning about the properties of triangles and squares while they made Christmas decorations. The teaching assistant encouraged children to describe the shape using the right mathematical vocabulary. Another group of children practised their writing skills while writing labels for their reindeer food. Other children practised their letter formation and writing skills while writing Christmas cards. The range of opportunities enabled children to build on their skills effectively.
- Teaching assistants work alongside class teachers to provide effective support to pupils. They support pupils through effective questioning and help them to learn from their mistakes. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed working in a small group to make a nativity collage. The teaching assistant supported pupils' learning through effective questioning and working alongside pupils to gauge their understanding throughout the activity.
- Pupils who spoke with the inspector clearly explained the importance of learning about different religions and celebrating diversity. One pupil explained that learning about diversity is important because the world is made up of different people and everyone should feel included. Pupils have a good understanding of the school's values and how they can be used to support them in the world outside school.
- Pupils learn about healthy food in an innovative way. The school grounds have been developed by volunteers among parents. They aim to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about growing fruit and vegetables from seed to crop. The school has an allotment, orchard and extensive container garden. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating because of the interesting opportunities

provided for them.

- Pupils are taught reading skills well. They use and apply their phonics skills effectively. During group reading activities, teachers help pupils to develop their comprehension skills through effective questioning. They use a range of activities in the classroom to help pupils to develop their reading skills and enjoyment of reading. Pupils discuss the books they are reading confidently and indicate their reading preferences. For example, pupils talked knowledgeably about a series of books by a particular author.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- teachers intervene more quickly to move pupils' learning forward during mathematics lessons, particularly for the most able pupils, so that a greater proportion of pupils make faster progress
- teachers in the early years use assessment information to plan challenging activities for all children, both indoors and outdoors, so that more children make good progress in all areas of learning

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Emma Nuttall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke with parents before school and with a group of pupils during the day about their school experience. Jointly with you, I visited a range of classes and we sampled pupils' books. In addition, I checked the school's safeguarding arrangements and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks on staff and volunteers. I evaluated the school's documentation about pupils' achievement, planning for improvement and attendance. I took account of the 39 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 21 responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text service. I considered 55 responses from pupils and 11 responses from staff to Ofsted's online surveys of these two groups.

